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TUBMAN SCHOOL

RICHMOND COUNTY
AUGUSTA, GEORGIA
1874 - 1973

A BRIEF HISTORY

COMPILED BY:
MARY A. BRANCH
MARY ANN BRITT

1973

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DEDICATION

This Tubman history is dedicated to those Augusta area educators who, in their giving of self and knowledge, have so exemplified the spirit of education as found in the annals of the Tubman School.

Minerva

SCHOOL SONG

"BLACK AND GOLD"

Now we'll give a cheer for Tubman,
For the school we love the most!
Evermore we sing her praises,
And her name shall be our boast.
To the top we'll raise her colors,
And her standards ever hold.
Then let us give a rousing cheer
For the Tubman black and gold.
Then let us give a rousing cheer
For the Tubman black and gold.

Chorus

So with voices loud and strong,
To her name we raise a song,
For to her our hearts belong,
With a love untold.
Then we'll cheer for Tubman High!
May her spirit never die,
Victorious may fly
Dear old black and gold.

Velma Bell
Class of 1925

Tune: "They All Love Jack"

School Colors: Black and Gold

Emily Harvie Thomas Tubman

March 21, 1794--June 9, 1885

Emily Harvie Thomas, daughter of Ann Chiles and Edmund Pendleton Thomas, was born in Ashland, Hanover County, Virginia. Following the death of her father when she was but nine years old, Emily became the ward of Henry Clay.

Little is known of her early life, but in 1818 she traveled from Frankfort, Kentucky, at that time her home, to visit her mother's cousins, Colonel and Mrs. Nicholas Ware and their niece, Mary Ariuton Ware, who lived in Augusta, Georgia. During her visit, she met an Englishman, Richard C. Tubman, a wealthy planter and merchant, whom she married later that year.

Mrs. Tubman fitted easily into Augusta social life and was known for her graciousness and understanding. When the Marquis de Lafayette visited Augusta in 1825, Mrs. Tubman was in charge of arrangements at the Planter's Hotel and was honored to lead the minuet at the evening's festivities with the Marquis.

Following the death of her husband in 1836, Emily was faced with finding a way of carrying out a portion of her husband's will. In it he had stated the desire to free his slaves with the exception of only a few household servants. At this time, however, Georgia laws were very strict concerning the emancipation of slaves,

and the Emancipation Proclamation was yet to be signed in 1862.

Yet, in 1844 Emily called her slaves together and told them about a country being established in west Africa for freed slaves--Liberia. She gave them the choice of freedom in Liberia or remaining with her. For the sixty-nine who chose freedom, she furnished a ship from Baltimore and a fund to help them establish homes and to provide supplies for them.

Emily Tubman's influence in Liberia can still be found. The name of one community is Tubmantown, and from 1943 until his death on July 23, 1971, the president of Liberia was William Vaccanarat Shadrach Tubman, a grandson of William Shadrach and Sylvia Ann Elizabeth Tubman, two of the freed Tubman slaves.

Mrs. Tubman provided food, clothes, and shelter for those slaves who chose to remain with her until they were able to establish themselves.

Following her husband's death, Emily Tubman devoted her efforts toward the support of the Disciples of Christ Church under the leadership of Alexander Campbell, and through this religious interest she played an important part in the establishment of the First Christian Church and the Central Christian Church in Augusta.

Although Emily Tubman used her financial resources to further many religious causes, she also used these resources in

the interest of education. In 1874 at the age of eighty, Mrs. Tubman purchased the Christian Church building located on the 700 block of Reynolds Street in Augusta near the Cotton Exchange and donated it to the Richmond County Board of Education for the purpose of establishing a public high school for girls. Prior to this, the first free girls' school in Augusta was operated by Mr. Ben Neely in a few rented rooms on Broad Street. Mr. Neely would become the first principal of the new school--Tubman High School for girls.

Upon her death in 1885, Emily Tubman was honored with the placing of a marble tablet in the First Christian Church of Augusta. It bears her name and the inscription: Si Monumentum Quoeria Circumspice (If you seek her monument, look around). Mrs. Tubman was buried in the family cemetery, Frankfort, Kentucky, near the grave of Daniel Boone.

711 Reynolds Street

TUBMAN SCHOOL

1874-1918

Established in 1874 in the old Christian Church building on the 700 block of Reynolds Street, Tubman High School for girls graduated its first class, consisting of six girls, in 1877. According to reports, the address was given by Mr. John S. Davidson and graduates wore calico dresses.

The first faculty consisted of one male and one female, and the course of study for the three-year program was as follows:

First Year: arithmetic, spelling and defining, Latin, French, rhetoric, natural philosophy, reading, and history.

Second Year: arithmetic, algebra, synonyms, Latin, French, natural philosophy, physical geography, penmanship, reading, and history.

Third Year: algebra, Latin, French, English literature, physical geography, chemistry, astronomy, penmanship, reading, and history.

Students chose between Latin and French. Calisthenics was required twice a week, and girls were allowed to remove bustles and corsets for public exhibitions. This was the only freedom of movement and display of form allowed.

The school seems to have been popular from the beginning.

Annual commencements were held in the "Grand Opera House" located on the northeast corner of Eighth and Green Streets with full, front-page coverage being given the event in the local newspapers.

A typical commencement program included the following:

Class Motto:	"Live to Learn, Learn to Live"
Welcome Song	School
Salutatory	
Recitation	Class Member
Song	School
Class History	Class Member
Song	School
Valedictory	
Intermission	
Delivery of Diplomas	
Announcement of Honors	
Address	Local Notable
Benediction	

In the early days of Tubman's history women's education was still not considered of great importance; however, in 1892 a fourth year of study was added to the curriculum. It consisted of higher mathematics, history, literature, and science. At this time, the Board hired a physical culture teacher to visit the school once a week in order to "draw the blood away from the brain and into the vital organs and limbs."

Early Board reports show the cost of education to be approximately $1.05 per pupil per month.

Although the early building remained largely intact, it was enlarged twice, once for the purpose of adding a course in cooking or domestic science. This course was scoffed at as largely unnecessary by the majority of the public.

According to the records of Dr. Lawton B. Evans, superintendent of Richmond County schools for over fifty years, there were 100 girls enrolled in Tubman in 1882. The principal, who had succeeded Mr. Ben Neely in 1880, was the Reverend Mr. William S. Bean. He received a salary of $1200 for eight months' service, and the other teacher, Mrs. Sarah Adams McWhorter, received $800.

In 1903 Professor Thomas Harry Garrett, principal of the Woodlawn Grammar School, was designated principal of Tubman High School upon the death of Principal John Neely. Mr. Neely had been principal, succeeding Mr. Bean, from 1883 until his death. His brother, Ben Neely, had been Tubman's first principal. Mr. Garrett was to hold the longest tenure as a Tubman principal, for he held this position until 1945 when he retired as principal emeritus.

As early as 1911 Mr. Garrett had written a lengthy article in the Augusta papers citing the need for a new school to house the Tubman High School students, numbering about 200 at that time. He stated that it was then impractical to accept more students, since some classes had as many as 86 students in them.

Early in 1913 it was announced that a lot had been purchased for the erection of a new school, and Professor Garrett expressed his hopes that the new school would be completed by the end of the year. However, because of continuing conflicts over the real need for the new school, Mr. Garrett's dream was not fulfilled immediately.

Again, in 1915, Mr. Garrett in a letter to the editor pointed out the dangers facing students attending Tubman, still located on Cotton Row. He said that the most important menace was the danger of fire and the lack of accessible exits because of the bales of cotton blocking the streets surrounding the school.

Then, Fate, which seemingly dealt a tremendous blow to Augusta's business and residential district on the night of March 22, 1916, with the Great Augusta Fire, stepped to the aid of Augusta's girls and Professor Garrett's cause with the total destruction of Tubman High School on Reynolds Street.

Never had Augusta known such total destruction; however, on March 27, 1916, the students of Tubman High School held their first meeting following the fire in the Sunday School Building, also known as the Telfair Building, of the First Presbyterian Church located on Telfair Street. The assembly that morning consisted of the following program:

Psalm 47	Mr. Garrett
Prayer	School
Welcome	Mr. Garrett

"America"	School
Talk	Dr. Sevier
Talk	Miss Flisch
Talk	Mr. C. E. Whitney
Thanks from representatives of each class for use of the building:	
Senior	Emily Weigle
Junior	Adelaide Pund
Sophomore A	Miriam Gerald
Sophomore B	Virginia Burum
Freshman A	Marion Battle
Freshman B	Katherine Hagler

During the nearly two years before the new Tubman was opened, this church building and other buildings in the vicinity served as classrooms for Tubman students.

Work was soon begun on the new school to be located at 1740 Walton Way near the center of population at that time. The site for the new school had been known as the Scheutzen Platz, a piece of property owned by the German Society of Augusta and used for a clubhouse, beer garden, and shooting place. This land was purchased for $20,000 by the Board of Education. Shortly after the fire a school bond for $100,000 was passed to build the new school. This bond was the first school bond passed by Augustans.

The new building was made of cream-colored, pressed brick to accomodate 600 girls. In February, 1918, 300 girls moved into the new school, and in May, 1918, formal dedication was held.

1740 Walton Way

TUBMAN SCHOOL

1918-1973

The new Tubman High School was one of the most modern schools in the South. There was an auditorium to seat almost 700, a library, a laboratory, a lunchroom, and a principal's office. Surely, this building would adequately serve the community's needs for many years. Nevertheless, by 1932, the student body had increased to 900, a three-storied wing had been added to the main building, and a new lunchroom had been built behind the school. Even objectors to the building of the new school had to admit that they had "outguessed the ability to fill the building with students by ninety-seven years." By 1939 the school housed nearly 1200 students.

With the increase in students, Tubman's reputation as one of the finest educational facilities in the South was on the upswing also. No other school could begin to compete with this school in the Augusta area. It was during the high school years of Tubman after 1918 that traditions often associated with the school were begun. No graduate of the Tubman of those years can forget Maids and a Man, the school yearbook, which received its title because Mr. Garrett was usually the sole male at Tubman. Nor can one forget Minerva, the statue of the Greek goddess of wisdom, who for many years took her place at Tubman's entrance to guard, protect, and inspire her charges to reach for greater heights. Now, she stands in some forgotten closet, a

victim of time and change. During this time, Tubman girls attended daily chapel exercises where they sang "The Black and Gold" and listened to the strains of "The Tubman High School March."

Students came from surrounding counties and South Carolina to board in Augusta homes in order to attend Tubman. Others commuted daily by train and other means of travel from such nearby communities as Aiken and Grovetown.

In 1945, Tubman was dealt a blow with the forced retirement of T. Harry Garrett, its much beloved principal. Elected as his successor was Mr. Lamar Woodward who remained principal until 1951.

In 1951, because of the trends of the times and the need for additional schools in Richmond County, a bitterly protested change was necessitated in Tubman High School. At this time the Board of Education decided to make the Academy of Richmond County a coeducational high school and to make Tubman a coeducational junior high, consisting of grades eight through ten.

This change marked the end of an era for Augusta girls. No longer would they attend Tubman High School to receive their diplomas. Other junior highs would soon be built to compete with Tubman. A shop wing was added to provide classes in wood, metal, and drafting for the new male students.

In 1951, Mr. D. K. McKenzie became principal. During his tenure was published the school newspaper, the Tubman Times. When Mr. McKenzie left in 1961, Dr. C. D. Sheley became principal.

Under Dr. Sheley new equipment was purchased for the shop, science, and home economics departments. Perhaps the most

significant aspect of this period was the integration of Tubman in 1961 with approximately 10% Negro students. At the end of Dr. Sheley's principalship at Tubman in 1970 came another change--the loss of the tenth grade.

Mr. John P. Strelec was principal from 1970-1972 and the present principal is Mr. Albert A. Greenlee, the school's first black principal. The student population has dropped to about 600 at present with approximately one half black and one half white total enrollment.

Over the years Tubman has seen many changes. None perhaps was as important as its loss of high school status. Now Tubman consists of girls, boys; blacks, whites; academic courses, pre-vocational courses. Its faculty consists of almost forty members in a sixty/forty, white/black ratio.

Tubman's future is unknown, but for those who are a part of its tradition, Tubman will never be forgotten. It will always stand for excellence in education for those who have been a part.

In the Tubman tradition--

What do you remember?

Maids and a Man

One faculty room

10' X 10' principal's office

"Quiet in the Halls!"

Driver's Ed.

Student Patrol

Class pins--rings

Graduation night

Cloak rooms

Study halls 1 & 2

Middy blouses

Gym on the stage

Minerva

Exemptions

Field Days

White graduation dresses

The Honor League

Rebel Scene

"The Break"

Class Prophecies

Tubman Times

French Mardi Gras

Essay contests

Red roses at graduation

Bloomers

Boys at the back fence

May Festivals

Class Histories

Class days

Sub-freshmen

Lunchroom under the stage

Jr.-Sr. banquets

9:00-2:10 school days

Kid days

Demerits

Last Wills

Black stockings

Tubman High School March

Detention Hall

Morning Chapels

Valedictories

Single file on the stairs

One-room library

Trees in the backyard

Student-owned books

Roman banquets and weddings

TUBMAN SCHOOL TIME LINE

1874-1973

1874	1877	1880	1883	1892	1903	1916	1918
Mrs. Emily Tubman gives school to Board. Mr. Benjamin Neely made head.	1st class graduated.	Rev. Wm. Bean made head.	Mr. John Neely made head.	4th year added.	Mr. T. H. Garrett made principal.	Tubman destroyed in Augusta fire, March 22.	New school in use.

1928	1945	1950	1951	1961	1970	1972
Wing added to school.	Mr. Garrett retired. Mr. Lamar Woodward is new head.	Made a jr. high and coed-ucational.	Mr. D. K. McKenzie made head.	Dr. C. D. Sheley made head. First black students entered.	Mr. John P. Strelec made head.	Mr. Albert A. Greenlee became first black principal.

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